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## **Summary of Watershed-Based Mitigation Subcommittee Meeting**

**March 20, 2003, 9:30 AM - 2:30 PM at Natural Resources Bldg, Room 537**

**Committee Co-Chairs: Peter Birch, WDFW; Richard Gersib, WSDOT**

### **Attendees:**

- Dept. of Ecology: Patty Betts, Janice Sedlak
- Dept. of Fish and Wildlife: Peter Birch, Bob Zeigler
- Dept. of Transportation: Richard Gersib, Tim Hilliard, Christina Martinez, Steve Thompson, Susan Everett, Nicole Rutledge
- Dept. of Natural Resources: Annie Szvetcz
- Governor's Salmon Recovery Office: Phil Miller
- Office of Community Development: Wendy Compton-Ring
- US Army Corps of Engineers: Kate Stenberg

### **Discussion on Establishing Future Meeting Dates**

Try and stick to the third Thursday for April. Options aren't good when there is only one time a month someone can meet. Committee members need to provide Tim with 3 timeslots a month where they can commit to being here. A deadline was set for COB March 31<sup>st</sup> to have that to Tim. Tim will compile a spreadsheet with this information and also include other TPEAC meetings. The three days per month committee members choose need to be in the first, second or third week of month, and not Mondays or Fridays.

### **Review/Revise Meeting Agenda**

Update on SSHIAP study is to be added. Annie requested clarification regarding the Peer Review Update. This will be an update, not a discussion.

This meeting will serve as important preparatory step for a work plan to be developed by April, and presented to TPEAC by May.

### **TPEAC Update (Peter)**

Peter discussed TPEAC reauthorization. Without that the committee will not exist. It is bill #5279, so please keep track of this. There is a house version with bill #1384. Please keep an eye on it. Bill #5279 needs to move forward. Requirements to come up with new work plans, goals, and path. The bill calls for developing model ordinances for local governments to follow permitting process. The house bill is dead, but could come back to life. #5279 needs elements from #1384 in it.

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Updates on Programmatic Subcommittee: Secretary MacDonald needed to know the meaning behind programmatic agreements. Mr. MacDonald needed to understand the terms.

The Planning Subcommittee is extinct. When we get into our work plan, we need to address the idea of having some elements of what the Planning Subcommittee was doing and incorporate it into our work plan. There is a lot of crossover between committees.

Peter discussed permits and streamlining with Philip and the group. Senator Swecker is comfortable enough to push for reauthorization to the Legislature. Some will be happier than others with process/progress. Philip noted that services haven't been real active, and there is not a big turnout at today's meeting. Some members are overloaded. The Legislature is hitting member's schedules hard. Philip wants to make sure we don't lose track of their sideboards. The main TPEAC committee did decide to go every other month, so TPEAC is not scheduled again until April. Also will need to think about how they conduct meetings. Not by dumping information, but by discussing policy.

### **I-405 Beta Test**

Janice said there were a few meetings on beta test to look at on Stormwater. She talked to Ed O'Brien to brainstorm on stormwater. She doesn't know if this is good area for stormwater testing. There are exemptions for stormwater into Lake Washington, and there are a lot of other factors. They are willing to do it but want to see results, too. The project ends right where the Cedar River crossing is. Phillip is worried about scope of characterization.

We do have impacts on the lower Cedar River. It drains, but to say "impact" is harsh. It is a pretty impacted area anyway due to other factors unrelated to WSDOT. Anne said Chinook are iffy in this area. We can recommend I-405 for pilot project.

Christina and Dick have been talking and planned to go to TPEAC in May to recommend I-405 to start in June. Christina moved up schedule requesting and we need to start April 1 with a June/July timeline to produce products. Christina is getting federal money for NEPA. It has been directed by Secretary MacDonald to incorporate watershed mitigation into NEPA documents. We have an 18-24 month time line for getting to a record of decision. In able to incorporate this group into NEPA, we need a deadline of November 15. Christina is willing to work with things that seem unreasonable. There is still an urgency though. Dick acknowledged that SR522 has issues. The beta test needs to refine methods and put something on the ground.

Philip says GIS support was a problem when rushed. Services will be reluctant. There is flexibility to negotiate schedules. We want a quality product. If a project has funding, the project moves fast. Susan doesn't see it changing with pressure from the Legislature and public regarding accountability.

Janice stated they are still working on the transportation budget. When it comes to reviewing projects, it is real tight for her. She wants to see how many FTEs there are. There is not enough people with the expertise who can go through proposals on baseline on I-405. Peter's suggestion: with stormwater being a critical element, we do have some people who know stormwater in DFW to work with Ecology to help out directly or indirectly on project. Success is not being on time, it is getting it right. Grant money is awesome.

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Janice also wanted to know about using Al Wald. This is not an option. He would be reviewing his own work.

Dick and his fantasy world: He really wants to do the I-405 corridor 5 mile stretch. There is a good possibility that we could be done when Christina needs the information. Let's take from now until July 1 to do it. We will have the GIS done and ready to turn technical team loose. Dick proposes our pilot beta test be the I-405 corridor. He has no clue what GIS will cost and is developing a scope of work right now. Please give Dick direction on timelines and plans. Need to expand that to work on timeline on rest of I-405, not just the 5-mile stretch. The investigation of what is out there now is needed by July. Recommendations are needed by November.

Annie's concerns: a lot of comments on case study that reflect on chronology of methodology. Lets start big and focus down. Annie said a concern is if technical team produced information, then we review that and the team is already working on another part, we can't provide good feedback. We need people with services to make sure we are in right direction. Both sides need to be there. Dick had planned on Gantt chart, but got sidetracked. We need biology support, an ESA specialist, ecologist, and water quality specialist. He wants Ed Molash, Marion Carey, Bill Moore, and Anne Garrett to sit on his team meeting once a week to supervise and provide technical review. Steve wants to know about the beta test if there will be another run with BMPs? Secretary MacDonald is real big on cost benefits. Christina stated that in current design, stormwater design criteria is not there yet.

Annie requested to include in timeline some allowances if there is a delay in producing product that there is not more of a crunch to review. If there is a delay, we shouldn't cut into time of review.

Dick distributed map of sub-area of I-405 north of Cedar River. The beta test would start at Cedar River. Christina distributed a map of the 5-mile project. Dick and Christina will develop the scope of work with timelines, staffing needs, etc and bring it to the April meeting. They will send drafts out so the group can hit ground running. Kate added she will be doing permitting for all of the I-405 projects. Definitely glad she is here.

### **Updated 2003 Work Plan**

The following key elements for the work plan were identified after an in-depth discussion:

Tech Team responsibility:

- Beta test
- Stormwater technical / policy support
- Endangered Species Act technical / policy support
- SSHIAP / EDT integration

Subcommittee responsibility:

- Outreach (WSDOT internal; external)

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- Integration of watershed characterization concepts into technical and policy documents including but not limited to WSDOT's planning, design, construction, operations, and environmental manuals and the Highway Runoff Manual and Alternative Mitigation Guidelines Policy
  - Performance measures
  - Early action screening tool
  - Relationship of watershed characterization technical team to One-Stop Committee's IDT teams

### **Peer Review Update**

13-14 sets of reviews from committee members. For the December review, Tim is building a spreadsheet, but it is not ready yet. He is reading through and building a response summary. It will probably be two weeks to pull together. The comments that were due by March 17<sup>th</sup> are still trickling in. Because of time lines, Tim will be working on the responsive summary and will be editing document.

Advanced mitigation, Philip didn't know what was going on. Sometimes it was implementing, but wasn't clear why all this work of identifying options couldn't be done by implementing the options. Dick stated there is value to advanced identification.

Dick said he contacted some people regarding peer review. Some can do it, some can't, some need stipend. Give them a month to do it. Stuff that needs to be discussed to be pulled out and set aside.

### **Status of Performance Measures Work**

Already discussed, on hold until Secretary MacDonald says to move forward.

### **Establish agenda for April Meeting**

Update on where we are at with I-405. A big task will be looking at the first draft of the work plan.

### **SSHIAP EDT Integration**

Peter discussed Lower Columbia regional meeting and its outcome. Some progress is being made and we will further discuss in future meetings.

### **Next Meeting**

The next meeting is April 17<sup>th</sup>, after which we should have a new recurring date.